

Dear Parents,

Thank you to all the parents who attended the parent/teacher target meetings both in person and via school cloud. 100% of parents booked an appointment – if you were unable to attend, please call the school office to rearrange your appointment. These meetings are so valuable in supporting your child and seeing how they are progressing.

On Sunday, we gathered together for family Mass at our parish church. It was lovely to see so many of our families celebrating mass together and the children who attend the children's liturgy engaged so well. Our parish is ready to welcome us every week so please don't wait until the next family Mass.

Last week, our Year 6 children went to Stanley Head outdoor education centre. All of the children have had a wonderful time and have made memories that will last forever. As always, they were great ambassadors for our school with their fantastic attitudes and behaviour – thank you and well-done Year 6! Mr. Hodgson too said how brilliant you all were and we are very proud of you.

Over the past few weeks, a number of children have represented our school at sporting events such as cross country and football tournaments – particular congratulations to the Year 5/6 football team who won their tournament. A huge thank you and well done to all the children who showed not only great skill but more importantly great sportsmanship. Well done children!

Last week we also held our Macmillan Coffee morning. We were again overwhelmed by the generosity and support that we received. A special thank you to those who also volunteered their time to help out. A grand total of over £319.20 was raised through the coffee *morning* and the bake sale after school. Many thanks for all your support. This year all of the children also had a coffee morning in class. The children prayed to give thanks for those who work for the charity and to ask God to look after those supported by it.

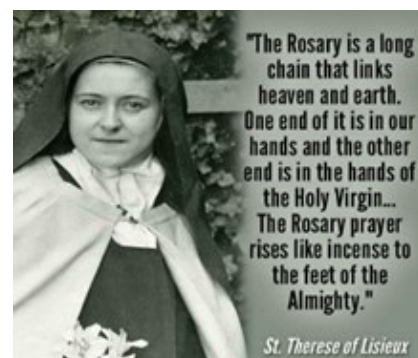
On Wednesday this week we will be celebrated our Harvest Mass in. All donations were greatly received by Stoke-on-Trent Foodbank. Thank you

On a final note, I would like to share the parental feedback from the questionnaire in the summer. All feedback is greatly appreciated and I will look forward to sharing developments that have come from the feedback with you in the near future.

Thank you for your continued support and I do wish you all a lovely weekend!

Mrs S. Rathbone

Next week the discipleship team will be leading the Rosary club. This will happen every Monday, Wednesday and Friday during October at 8:30am. All are welcome to attend





Well done to all of the children who received awards, we are very proud of you

	Head Teachers Award	Readers Award	Goldfinch Award
Nursery	Molly	Lucas	Amelia
Reception	Havanna	James	Deborah
Year 1	Olivia	Martha	Roman
Year 2	Isabelle	Imogen	Ankiambom
Year 3	Arabella	Ryann	Lucy
Year 4	Sobia	Arya	Charlie
Year 5	Elliott	Evie	Oscar
Year 6	Chloe	Freya	Bibi-Anais

We have appointed our Head and Deputy head children for this academic year.

Please join us in congratulating them all.

**Head Boy – Dominic**

**Head Girl—Eve**



**Deputy Head Boy— Fraser**

**Deputy Head Girl— Sophia**

## Heights and Weights Year 6

Year 6 parents have received a letter regarding heights and weights. Please check, and should you wish to opt out, the telephone number is on the letter.

**We are pleased to announce the launch of our new website which replaces the old one.**

Please click on the link below to take a look!

<https://www.stmarysstoke.co.uk>



Please click on the link below to view the school lunch menu

[St Mary's Catholic Academy - School Meals](#)





This academic year all pupils will take part in Forest club where they will learn about the outdoors and nature. This is linked to the curriculum.

**This half term Reception and Year 1 will take part.**

Please ensure appropriate outdoor clothing and footwear for wet/cold weather is brought into school every Wednesday.



If you would like to volunteer for school trips or would like to know more please speak to the school office.

Without volunteers our educational visits may not go ahead.

Congratulations to all the children who have taken part in the football, basketball and cross country Tournaments across the collegiate over the last few weeks.



We collectively raised **£319.20** between the coffee morning, donations and cake sale for Macmillan. Thank you so much!



Thank you to everyone who donated for the Harvest collection.

We were overwhelmed by the response!  
All of the food was donated to Stoke-On-Trent food bank which will be distributed locally.

**Reminder to Year 6 parents**  
High school application deadline is 31st October.

**THINK BEFORE YOU PARK**

**BE CONSIDERATE TO OUR NEIGHBOURS  
YOU COULD ENDANGER A CHILD'S LIFE**







## Important Information

**School Hours:** Monday - Friday Gates Open at 08:30am

**NEW Start Times:**

8.40-8.50am Nursery & Reception

8.40 KS1

8.50 KS2

**NEW Finish Times:**

3.20pm

3.10pm

3.20pm

**Studybugs**

### If your child is absent from school

Please telephone the school on 01782 234820,  
or email [office@stmarysnewman.co.uk](mailto:office@stmarysnewman.co.uk) no later than  
9.30am

Please download the free app for Studybugs. You can  
Inform the school whenever your  
child/ren are unwell and unable to attend school.

<https://studybugs.com/about/parents>

## EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS

*"Keeping up is easier  
than catching up!"*



[stoke.gov.uk](http://stoke.gov.uk)



### School Gateway App

Reminder please remember to download the School Gateway App  
To receive communications about achievement points awarded to your child/ren.

<https://schoolgateway.co.uk/get-started/>

A few important points to note about the activation of your account:

1. You need to register for School Gateway with the same email address and mobile number that the school has on file for you.
2. Once registered you will be sent a four-digit PIN which you will need to use to login. This PIN will be sent to the mobile number that you registered with.



## Autumn Term 2023

Date	Event
Monday 23rd - Wednesday 25th October	Y5 Alton Castle
Friday 27th October	School closes
Tuesday 31st October	Deadline for High school applications
Monday 30th October-Friday 3rd November	Half term
Monday 6th November	School closed to pupils - Inset day
Tuesday 7th November	School opens to pupils
Tuesday 7th November	Y5 Swimming (x5 weeks)
Thursday 9th November	Academy Photographers - Individual, family, siblings
Thursday 16th November	Maths Afternoon and evening 9-10am & 6-7pm
Tuesday 21st November	Foundation Stage prospective parents session 2pm & 5.30pm
Friday 24th November	Watch me learn 9am (Maths)
Monday 28th/Tuesday 29th November (TBC)	City Songbirds concert
Tuesday 12th December	Christmas Concerts Foundation stage 2pm and KS1 6pm
Wednesday 13th December	Christmas Concerts KS1 2pm and Foundation stage 6pm
Tuesday 19th December	Christmas Dinner day
Friday 22nd December	Carol Concert KS2 Nativity in church
Friday 22nd December	School Closes

Celebration Assemblies are on the following Fridays at 2.30pm:

6th October	KS2
13th October	KS1
20th October	Year 5
27th October	KS2
10th November	Year 6

Please remember to bring in any certificates as we love to celebrate achievements in our assemblies!

## Term Dates

(See above for Autumn term dates)

### SPRING TERM

School closed to pupils—Inset day Monday 8th January

School opens to pupils on Tuesday 9th January

**Half Term Monday 12th February to Friday 16th February**

School opens to pupils Monday 19th February

School Closes Friday 22nd March



# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

# WHATSAPP

AGE RESTRICTION  
**16+**

In UK and Europe,  
rest of the world 13+

...MSG ME...

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

With more than two billion active users exchanging texts, photos, videos and documents, as well as making voice and video calls, WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging service. Its end-to-end encryption only allows messages to be viewed by the sender and any recipients: not even WhatsApp itself can read them. This privacy issue has been in the spotlight recently, as the UK's Online Safety Bill proposes to end such encryption on private messaging. WhatsApp is unwilling to do so and has reportedly considered withdrawing its service in the UK should this legislation go ahead.

## EVOLVING SCAMS

WhatsApp's popularity makes it a lucrative hunting ground for scammers. Recent examples include posing as the target's child, requesting a money transfer because of a spurious 'emergency'. Plus a scam where fraudsters trigger a verification message by attempting to log in to your account, then (posing as WhatsApp) call or text to ask you to repeat the code back to them, giving them access.

## CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

To start a chat, someone only needs the mobile number of the WhatsApp user that they want to message. If your child has ever given their number out to someone they don't know, that person could then contact them via WhatsApp. It's also possible that your child might be added to a group chat (by one of their friends, for example) containing other people that they don't know.

## FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp's connectivity and ease of use allows news to be shared rapidly – whether it's true or not. To combat the spread of misinformation, messages forwarded more than five times on the app now display a 'Forwarded many times' label and a double arrow icon. This makes users aware that the message they've just received is far from an original... and might not be entirely factual, either.

## ONLINE

## 'VIEW ONCE' CONTENT

The facility to send images or messages that can only be viewed once has led to some WhatsApp users sharing inappropriate images or abusive texts, knowing that the recipient can't re-open them later to use as evidence of misconduct. People used to be able to screenshot this 'disappearing' content – but a recently added WhatsApp feature now blocks this, citing increased privacy.

## CHAT LOCK

Another new option allows users to store certain messages or chats in a separate 'locked chats' folder, saved behind a passcode, fingerprint or face ID authentication. The risk here is that this function creates the potential for young people to hide conversations and content that they suspect their parents wouldn't approve of (such as age-inappropriate material).

## VISIBLE LOCATION

WhatsApp's 'live location' feature lets users share their current whereabouts, which can be helpful for friends meeting up or parents checking that their child's safely on the way home, for example. However, anyone in your child's contacts list or in a mutual group chat can also track their location – potentially letting strangers identify a child's home address or journeys that they make regularly.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

...TYPING...

## EMPHASISE CAUTION

Encourage your child to treat unexpected messages with caution: get them to consider, for example, whether the message sounds like something a friend or relative would really send them. Make sure they know never to share personal details over WhatsApp, and to be wary of clicking on any links in messages. Setting up two-step verification adds a further layer of protection to their WhatsApp account.

## ADJUST THE SETTINGS

It's wise to change your child's WhatsApp settings (go to 'Privacy', then 'Groups') to specify which of their contacts can add them to group chats without needing approval: you can give permission to 'My Contacts' or 'My Contacts Except...'. Additionally, if your child needs to use 'live location', emphasise that they should enable this function for only as long as they need – and then turn it off.

## THINKING BEFORE SHARING

Help your child to understand why it's important to stop and think before posting or forwarding something on WhatsApp. It's easy – and all too common – for content to then be shared more widely (even publicly on social media). Encourage your child to consider how an ill-judged message might damage their reputation or upset a friend who sent something to them in confidence.

## CHAT ABOUT PRIVACY

Some parents like to check in with their child about how they're using WhatsApp, explaining that it will help to keep them safe. If you spot a 'Locked Chats' folder, you might want to talk about the sort of chats that are in there, who they're with and why your child wants to keep them hidden. Also, if your child has sent any 'view once' content, you could discuss their reasons for using this feature.

## Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Dutheland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



...HEY OSCAR...

**NOS** National Online Safety®  
#WakeUpWednesday

Sources: <https://blog.whatsapp.com/an-open-letter> | <https://faq.whatsapp.com/077088254232> | [https://faq.whatsapp.com/3340958086245/helpref-hc\\_faq](https://faq.whatsapp.com/3340958086245/helpref-hc_faq) | <https://www.whatsapp.com/security> | <https://blog.whatsapp.com/chat-lock-making-your-mom-instantly-concerned> | <https://www.cisco.com/learn/whatsapp-scams>